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M A G A Z I N E

JUNE 2014

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Far Afield

Russell Smith
makes a bid to
represent the
USA at the Pan
American Games

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the Bride
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Tamy Riley

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ON THE COVER



Russell Smith practices his pitch for greatness.

Photo by Amy Ramirez.

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Editor's Note

Hello, Midlothian!

When I wrote my first article for *MidlothianNOW* in 2005, my kids were in the fifth, seventh and 10th grades. 2014 promises to be momentous as well. My son Philip graduated from The University of Texas at Austin, and he plans to be commissioned as an officer in the Marines. He joins a long list of men in our family who have served our country in the military. In addition to graduating and joining the Marines, he became engaged

to Joanna Mueller, who is currently working on her master's degree.

A short month after Phil's engagement announcement, my daughter, Lauren, now a senior at UT Austin, became engaged to Keenan Robinson, a linebacker for the Washington Redskins. My oldest son Stephen now lives in California. Life has been a whirlwind since 2005. My husband and I are enjoying living in Midlothian, as I welcome the opportunity to continue bringing you the best stories here.

Betty

Betty Tryon
MidlothianNOW Editor
betty.tryon@nowmagazines.com



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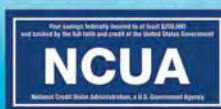


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★ Valedictorian

Elizabeth Keener

She will attend LeTourneau University and major in mechanical engineering.

CLASS OF 2014

Graduation Ceremony

Friday, June 6 at 8:00 p.m.
MISD Multi-Purpose Stadium

More details at
www.midlothian-isd.net/mhs



★ Salutatorian

Nicholas Larson

He will attend Baylor University and major in physics.

MHS Among Best in State and Nation

Midlothian High School is ranked in the top 10% among the best high schools in the state and nation by U.S. News & World 2014 rankings, which is based on student performance on state assessments and how well students are prepared for college.

The magazine analyzed academic and enrollment data from more than 19,400 public high schools and then placed selected schools into gold, silver, bronze, or honorable mention categories. MHS received a silver medal for its continued effort in academic excellence.

"This accomplishment can be attributed to our dedicated teaching staff and students who are second to none," said Dr. Al Hemmle, principal.

Duke Talent 7th Grade Scholars

The Duke Talent program identifies bright seventh graders based on standardized test scores achieved while attending middle school. Candidates are encouraged to take the ACT or SAT college entrance exams, which allows them greater insight into their academic abilities. Students who qualify for State Recognition or Grand Recognition met rigorous performance standards that compared their scores to national percentile rankings of all students, primarily high school, who took the ACT or SAT exams.

(Walnut Grove Middle School: Trace LaFrenz, Alexandra Sackett, Rachel Sims, who also earned Grand Recognition; Frank Seale Middle School: Emma Curran, Madeleine Hesselgesser, Kara Kolessar, Mary Sevart.)

MIDLOTHIAN ISD

2014-2015
CALENDAR

AUGUST 2014

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30	31					

Grading Period:

Elementary:
Aug. 25 - Oct. 24
Oct. 27 - Jan. 16
Jan. 20 - Mar. 27
Mar. 30 - June 5

Secondary:
Aug. 25 - Oct. 24
Oct. 27 - Dec. 18
Jan. 6 - Mar. 20
Mar. 23 - June 5

Holidays:

Sept. 1 - Labor Day
Oct. 13 - Fair Day
Nov. 24-26 - Thanksgiving Break
Dec. 22-Jan. 2 - Winter Break
Mar. 9-13 - Spring Break
May 25 - Memorial Day

Staff Development: Aug. 19-22, Oct. 13, Jan. 5, & May 18 (Education Showcase)

Staff Work Day: Aug. 21 & June 6

Comp. Days: Nov. 24 & Jan. 19

Bad Weather/Make-up Days: Apr. 3 & May 22

Early Release Days: Sept. 19 (Homecoming), Dec. 18, 19 & June 4, 5 (Graduation)

Testing dates: Midlothian-isd.net/calendar

Legend

- [] Elementary Grading Period Starts
- [] Elementary Grading Period Ends
- [] Secondary Grading Period Starts
- [] Secondary Grading Period Ends
- [] Staff Development, Staff Work Day and Comp. Day (No School)
- [] Bad Weather Day
- [] Holiday & Non-School Day
- [] Early Release

*May 22 will be the first bad weather make-up day.



Midlothian Heritage High School



Ribbon Cutting & Grand Opening Ceremony
Sunday, August 17 at 3 p.m.

Lessons Galore: Educational Showcase



The district curriculum is based on guided lessons that provide a motivational framework for improving student performance through the quality work that teachers design for students. The annual Educational Showcase is one way to celebrate what students do on a daily basis in MISD.

(Photo credit to Elli Keener and Celina Robinson)



(Mt. Peak 1st grader Dylan K. plays a game programed by the MHS game programming and design class.)

Good Luck to Project S.E.E.D.S at Internationals



The middle school Community Problem Solvers won 2nd at state and will advanced to Internationals in June for their Project S.E.E.D.S. (STEM Education to Enhance Daily life Skills) that helps MISD special needs classes, also known as CBI (Community Based Instruction). They show them how to grow and harvest food in a greenhouse environment and teach STEM related lessons to help guide them from the classroom setting out into our growing world.

WOODROW'S Coffee Shop Operated by MHS Students



(MHS students Imani Jordan, Abimelec Rivera Fernandez, Kaylee Evers and program mentor Zach Hopkins.)

Woodrow's is not only a coffee shop - it's a unique opportunity for MHS students to learn real-world business management, leadership and entrepreneurial skills thanks to program mentor Zach Hopkins and founder/sponsor Richard Reno.

MISD Advertising Program

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E-blast: exclusive email ad sent directly to MISD employees' inbox



District Calendar: 2-sided calendar with useful dates for the school year on the front, and a map of MISD campuses and contact info on the back



District Website: homepage boasts 8,000 unique visits per day



Grab a cup of a cup of coffee, soda or pastry M-F, 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. and

summer hours are 7 a.m. to 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. located in the Midlothian Back Alley Plaza.

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FAR A

— By Betty Tryon

Six-month-old Russell Smith couldn't be comforted, so his parents, Jeremy and Buffie, played their trump card. "We noticed that when he was fussy, he would quiet down and be mesmerized if his dad was watching any type of sports on TV," Buffie explained. "He has always loved sports. From the time he started walking, he was doing something with a ball."

As Russell grew, his interest in sports only increased. At the age of 2, he received a little plastic basketball goal, and it quickly became a favorite toy. Two years later, while playing outside with friends, he was actually making goals on a regular size basketball goal. Russell did have an edge since he was always a little taller than the other kids. Now a freshman in high school, he stands 6 feet 8 inches.

Russell has had many nicknames through the years but "lil big unit" seems to suit him best. The name came about as a takeoff on Randy "The Big Unit" Johnson, who was a major league baseball pitcher for 22 years. Buffie noticed coincidences between Randy and Russell. "Randy was a tall, 6 foot 10 inch, left-handed pitcher like Russell," she noted. "Not only does Russell have Randy's build, they also share the same birthday which is September 10."

Russell takes it all in stride and remembers his first week in high school. "I would get asked by about 20 or 30 kids a day, 'How tall are you?' I'm just a freshman, but I'm already the tallest kid in school." Russell is a member of the varsity team for baseball and basketball, although his preference is for baseball, and he's very good at it. He has always been proficient at the game, even when he was 4 and playing the position of pitcher on his T-ball team. Athletics came easily to him. "I've always liked sports," he said. "I just kept getting better at it. I've been lucky, and God has blessed me with some talent."

FIELD

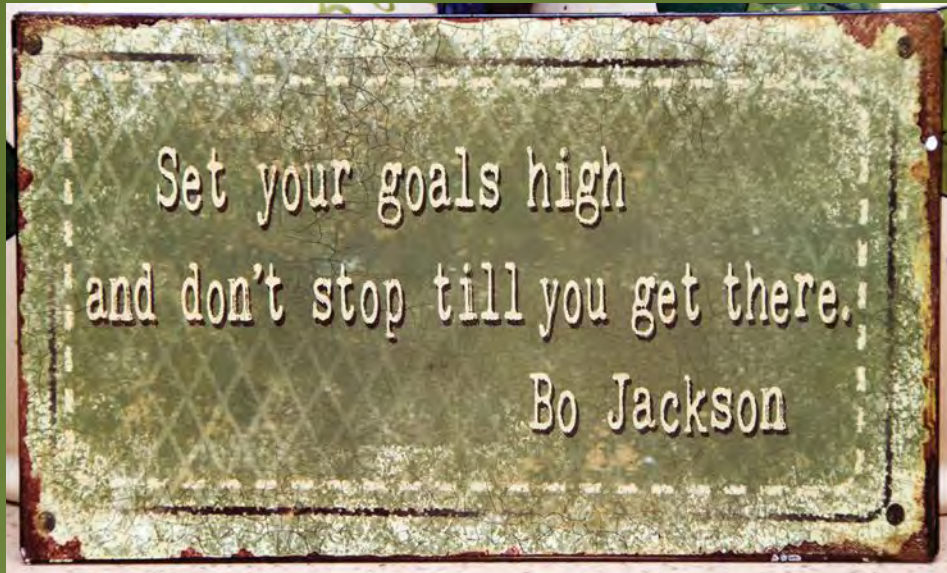



That talent has opened the door to opportunities he would not otherwise have had. In his early teen years, he played for the Dallas Patriots, a select baseball team.

"We were extremely lucky to be part of this team, as they were one of the top teams in 13U baseball in the country," Buffie shared. When the Patriots were invited to the USA Baseball East Championship Tournament in Cary, N.C., Russell's performance during the tournament was the catalyst that eventually earned him the chance to try out for the national team that would represent the U.S. in the Pan American Games. The Pan-Am games replaced the Olympics for international competition in baseball.

The summer before he started eighth grade, Russell went to the USA National Development Program. "It was like a long camp where they had pros and some of the best kids in the country," Russell recalled. At the camp, players were kept busy with practice in the mornings and performing in inter squad games during the evenings. "I remember those practices," he said. "They had us practicing, running or throwing all the time. The games were really intense, because most of the guys out there were really good. That was one of the best experiences I've had with baseball. I learned where I needed to get better."

This past summer the national team tryouts were held. Russell competed against 39 other boys for a spot on the 20-man roster that represented the USA in





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Barranquilla, Colombia, in August 2013. Russell was trying out for the position of pitcher along with 23 others



for just 10 spots. At the national tryouts, he admitted to being nervous. "I was just shaking before I went in," Russell recounted. "But I was able to relax a little bit before I had to go out and pitch." He was the second youngest person there trying out for a spot on the national team.

All the players who make it to the national tryout earn a huge advantage. Their exposure to the top schools is very important in scoring a scholarship. Some representatives from a few schools were interested in Russell and sent him letters. "I am a freshman now, so they really can't talk to me until September 1 of my junior year," he explained. "All they can do is send a questionnaire and tell us to stay in touch."



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Another benefit of Russell's for reaching national tryouts was a renewed interest in education. He could see that mediocre grades could keep him from getting a scholarship. "One of the things I learned," Russell confided, "was that if there is a kid almost as good as you but he has a 4.0 GPA, they will probably go for the kid with the better GPA, because he will probably stay on the field. I didn't take that lightly and decided to hit the books this year."



It was while he was at the national tryouts that Russell realized the significance of the international game. "It sunk in more and more that I was trying to get a spot for my country," he shared. "It was humbling, and when I didn't make the team, I was bummed out. I got over it, but there will always be that question of, 'What if I could've done it.' Who wouldn't want to represent their country with USA across your chest?" At the tryouts, the organizers



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wanted potential members of the team to appreciate the spirit of patriotism that the game represented. "We had a speaker from the military who told us about some of the things he's seen and how



**"I GOT TO PITCH
FOR THREE INNINGS
AT NATIONAL
TRYOUT AND SHOW
MY SKILLS."**



lucky we are that we get to play the game we love," Russell said. "That really got to my heart."

In addition to the military guest, there were speakers who talked about college

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Jamie Wickliffe
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2406 Savanna Circle - MLS#12108362

This lovely one-story 4-3-2 in the coveted Somerset community is a must-see! Beautiful entryway, split bedrooms, large laundry-hobby room and open floor plan provide easy flow for entertaining. Large, dream kitchen with stainless steel appliances & granite all around. Professional landscape lets you enjoy peaceful mornings on your covered back patio overlooking the vacant land next door!



2234 Woodland Circle MLS #12066962

Jump right into this prestigious Somerset home. This one-owner, custom home is perfect for your summer party. Four spacious bedrooms & study. Master suite has a queen's closet. Open plan creates space for everyone. Cook's kitchen and large dining areas. Oasis-type pool with fountain and hot tub. Tiled back porch for summer cookouts.



1934 Juniper MLS #12098240

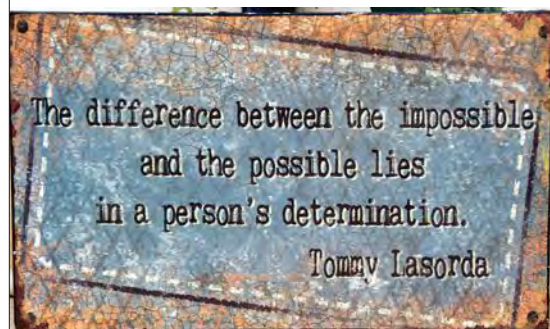
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recruiting and on how to deal with the media and interviews. Another gave guidance on how players should represent their country at the national level.

As a freshman, Russell is still examining options for a future career in baseball. "I want to go to a four-year school and get a degree to become maybe a coach or a lawyer," he grinned. He still has time to decide his ultimate



path in life. Meanwhile, he continues to enjoy the game of baseball and hopes to pursue another shot at the national team. For now, the memory of his first great experience sustains him: "I got to pitch for three innings at national tryout and show my skills." **NOW**

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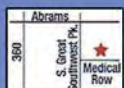
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— By Betty Tryon

The young mother was on a mission. She had to find a good school for her kids. Driving around Midlothian, she searched out the schools at various times of the day. She especially took note of the ones with lots of cars in the parking lot and took that as a good sign. "If I saw a huge amount of parental support, then I knew that was a place I wanted to be," explained Kim Buttgen, kindergarten teacher at Longbranch Elementary School.

"I was living in another city at the time and had heard really incredible recommendations from people about Midlothian. Being a teacher, I was particular about things." Kim ended her search when she went into Longbranch and spoke to Nina





Challenger, who was a vice principal at the time. "I went in with my notepad and spoke to her for 45 minutes. I remember telling my husband that about 10 minutes into the conversation, I knew we could leave our children there."

So began Kim's long association with Longbranch. "I was at Longbranch first as a parent," Kim said. "Knowing I had my degree and had taught for 10 years, the principal approached me to teach."



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“I feel so honored and blessed to have this opportunity.”

This year marks her eighth year back in teaching — all at Longbranch. “I love it here,” she stated. “It’s like a family.”

Kim went to Angelo State University in West Texas, which is now a part of the Texas Tech University System. There she earned her Bachelor of Science in education. Her master’s degree in administration was earned at Texas Woman’s University.

Kim attributes her love of teaching to her mother. “I was blessed to have a mother (now deceased) who was in education, and she was my biggest inspiration.” In observing her mother throughout the years, Kim was impressed with what she saw. Their family was in the military, and although they had to move frequently, her mother was still a huge influence in the lives of others. Kim could see the impact educators had on the individuals they taught. “Students would come back years later to contact her. She would be invited to weddings and had some babies named after her. Even later in life, after I grew up, I could see lives she had touched — whether it was a word she said, a lunch she had given up so a student could eat or monetary contributions.”



One of the things Kim's mom taught her was to embrace differences. People are not obstacles or hurdles to get over. "We need to look at them as gifts that were given and learn how to embrace that for the betterment of everyone involved with them. I think this is extremely important." Kim teaches this concept by getting the children to see that everyone comes with "their own box of special talents." A special talent could be something a person does in a different manner from the way everyone else does it. "If the children see it as being something strange or weird, I try and turn that around by helping the children see things in different ways," she explained. "I try to put such differences in a positive realm instead of a negative spotlight. We are all special in our own way, and that might be right down to physical handicaps someone might have. One thing that is so precious about young children is they are very accepting of differences in people."

Kim has taught different age classes



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but really enjoys kindergartners. “I love them all for different reasons, but the little ones are like sponges. They give me a little energy boost every morning. They also bring me back to the simplicities of life. We get so busy and caught up in our schedules, and we forget about those things.” Kim acknowledges the best part of being a teacher is getting to be a part of her students’ lives. “I feel honored that I get to do what I do. They are the most precious gifts we’ve been given, and to be trusted by parents to help their children in the field of education is just beyond words for me.”

Although teaching students is important to Kim, she also wants them to know what beautiful people they are. In order to do that, she tries to be involved in their lives outside of school. “I go to their soccer games, baseball games or dance recitals, because it helps me to know them and the things they like. I try to tie all of that into my teaching, so they can see the relevance of what they are learning.”

Kim has advice for parents sending their children off to kindergarten. They should definitely work with their kids daily, and not just academically. Helping them develop basic learning skills is also important. Communication is huge to Kim. She encourages parents to sit down and talk with their children and have one-on-one conversations. “They need to understand about communication — about how we look in someone’s eyes and how we speak to people. Definitely



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work on those foundational things such as letters, sounds and numbers, but talking and language development is *huge* at this age.”

Kim also advocates exposing children to many different things. “Share with them what’s in our world today. I think technology has its place in the educational system and it’s very good, but at the same time, we need to make sure our kids have a limited amount of time with games and other things like that.” Kim also thinks it’s important children have time away from mom and dad. It makes the transition into kindergarten a little smoother.

Teaching can be a very stressful occupation, and Kim takes note of that when she travels to different universities and speaks to education classes. “I share with the future teachers that it is very important to have the best balance they can. Unfortunately, we all know there is never a complete balance. One thing always has to give a little bit, so you just have to do your best.” She also stresses how important it is to have a supportive family because of the amount of hours that are required in the field of education.

“I work with little lives, and I take that seriously. There are late nights and weekends when I am consumed with the work. I can’t slide on that, because those children are someone else’s world. It’s important not to take this job lightly. I feel so honored and blessed to have this opportunity. No two days are ever alike and that’s exciting to me!” **NOW**

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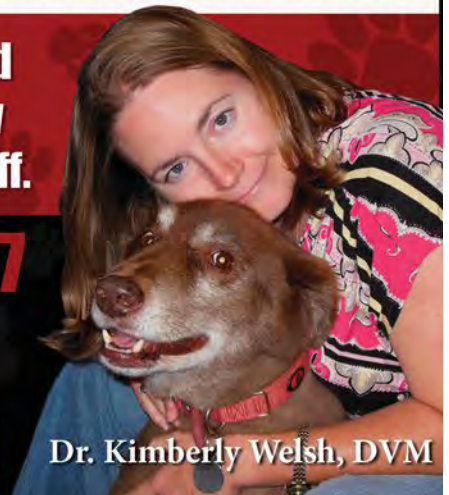
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Here Comes the *Bride*

— By Zachary R. Urquhart

Building a house and planning a wedding can both be time consuming, stressful events. Some brave people even try to do both at the same time. But in what must be a truly rare occurrence, one Midlothian couple is putting the finishing touches on the new home that will, in fact, host their wedding as well. This fall, Matt Snow and Tamy Riley will use a dream home for a dream wedding.

Matt and Tamy have worked for years for Liberty Mutual in varying capacities. Matt spent years traveling from one catastrophe site to another, while Tamy has



At Home With Matt Snow and Tamy Riley

mainly worked in the office. She lived in Maypearl with her two kids, Hunter and Madee, before coming to Midlothian. "We moved for the schools," she explained. "I looked around and really liked the Mt. Peak area, so we built our home here in 2012." Her children have really enjoyed living there. Madee plays volleyball for Frank Seale, and Hunter was thrilled to go to a high school with a wrestling team and has won district two years in a row.

Shortly after moving into the home with her kids, Tamy and Matt started dating. In March 2013, Matt was ready to pop the question, and he knew just how to do it. "I grew up with my dad collecting wines. Tamy and I were going

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to the Savor Dallas festival, so I talked to the owner and he helped me come up with the perfect plan,” he disclosed. “I just needed help getting her to stand still.”

“You are meant to keep moving as you sample the foods,” Tamy countered. “I didn’t know why he was trying to make me stop. Finally, my brother took my tasting plate and glass. I didn’t know what was happening until Matt went down on one knee.”

Now that they were engaged, Matt and Tamy were ready to start planning a

wedding, and they agreed on the perfect spot. “I spent so long on the road that the idea of having an actual home means a lot,” Matt said. “So getting married here is perfect.”

For Tamy and the kids, moving and starting fresh has been a focus. “So it made sense for us to have this event in the new house,” she admitted.

Before guests even arrive at the home, the transformation of the house into a destination wedding venue will begin. To prevent clogging the streets, guests will

park outside of the neighborhood. “We have a friend with a limousine company,” Matt said, “so guests will be driven here and walk up a red carpet to the house.”

Inside, guests will notice the hardwood floors throughout the home. “I was thinking about doing something different to save money, but they really make the house,” Tamy shared.

“I came by the house when she was gone one day, and they were done,” Matt said. “I told her, ‘I guess that makes that decision for you.’” The rotunda

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leads into the home office, which will be converted to a coat closet for the event. "I work from home, so we needed a good office space," Matt commented. "Making it a coat check will help create the feel for the wedding."

Moving through the home, the dining room is simple yet elegant, with a matching table and china hutch. For the wedding, the chairs will be removed and the table will offer wine and cheese pairings suggested by the couple. "We think that when someone visits your house, you should welcome them with something," Tamy said.

"I'll pick several bottles and cheese pairings," Matt continued. "And, of course, they can ignore me and just get whatever they want." Matt and Tamy enjoy wine tastings, as evidenced by where he proposed to her. He also plans to turn a large closet in the office into a wine cellar once the wedding is behind them.

Across from the dining room sits Madee's room, completed with purple paint and accents. "She loves purple," Tamy said, "and she'd love to play volleyball at Texas Christian University." Early signs signal that she may be able to make it, as one wall is dedicated to trophies and medals she has already accrued. Next to her room is a guest bedroom that doubles as a room for Matt's daughter, Amanda, when she visits.

The master bedroom is large with graceful furniture that will be removed for the wedding day. The cakes will be placed in Matt and Tamy's large bay windows, so they can be clearly seen from the backyard. The living room will also be stripped, as it will serve as a mingling area before and after the ceremony. The living room flows into an open kitchen with a unique bar. "I always thought the underside of the bar got so dirty with people's feet hitting it," Tamy recalled. "So I had them use stone that matches the fireplace." Matt and Tamy will bring in a bartender for the wedding,

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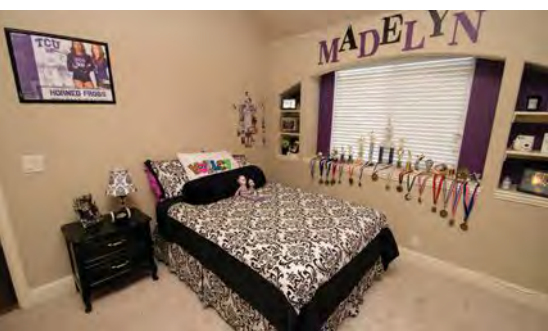
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and he will have the entire kitchen area at his disposal.

Upstairs, Hunter has his own space in what could be a second master bedroom. "The original plans called for another upstairs bedroom and a media room," Matt said, "but instead, we have 1,000-square-feet of floored attic." Hunter has plenty of room for his weight bench, a study area and lots of wall space for the wrestling accolades he has garnered in the past five years. For the wedding, Matt will turn the room into a bridal room, as Tamy will make a grand entrance descending into the ceremony from the upstairs room.



The entire wedding will lead guests from the front, through the house, into the backyard where the ceremony itself will take place. There are numerous decks and seating areas, some of which they had commissioned, some they built themselves, and all of which will be used for the wedding. Matt also built a grill area, completely faced with stone. "Tamy wasn't sure I would be able to do it, but she went somewhere for a few days, and when she came back, I had started," he laughed. "She was like, 'Wow that looks great!'"

After the ceremony, guests will complete the loop as they head around the yard to the driveway and garage. Tamy explained their plan, saying, "We are going to bring in a gourmet pizza food truck for the main course. That will keep the food separate from the main gathering areas." In a way, that completes the story of Matt and Tamy's relationship. The pizza will be provided by one of the vendors they first tasted at the same Savor Dallas event where the wedding planning began. While most wedding plans go from soup to nuts, for Matt and Tamy the planning instead goes from limos to a truck. **NOW**

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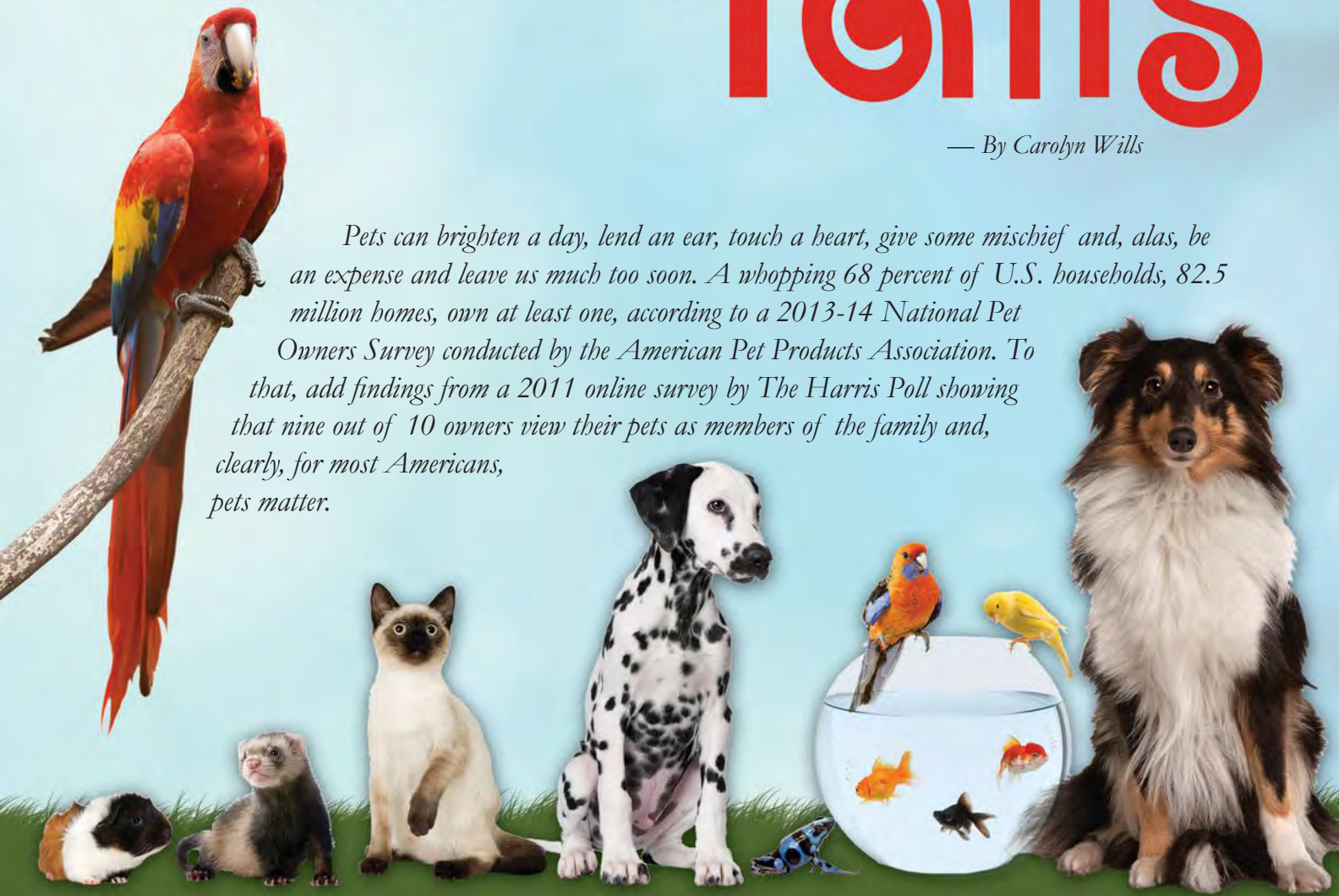
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Wagging Tails

— By Carolyn Wills

Pets can brighten a day, lend an ear, touch a heart, give some mischief and, alas, be an expense and leave us much too soon. A whopping 68 percent of U.S. households, 82.5 million homes, own at least one, according to a 2013-14 National Pet Owners Survey conducted by the American Pet Products Association. To that, add findings from a 2011 online survey by The Harris Poll showing that nine out of 10 owners view their pets as members of the family and, clearly, for most Americans, pets matter.



Anyone who has marveled at a cat, enjoyed the perfect horseback ride or looked into the eyes of an old dog knows the special language between human and animal. On the simplest level, pets are our companions, but they can also be conduits to physical, competitive and/or social outlets. Today, labels like “horse people” and “dog people” are familiar, and clubs, training facilities and activities exist for just about every breed, talent and interest.

Remarkably, Americans care for an estimated 20.6 million birds, 95.6 million cats, 83.3 million dogs, 8.3 million horses, 158.6 million fish, 11.5 million reptiles and 18.1 million small animals. That’s a lot of millions supporting pets, particularly against the realities of their expense and shorter life expectancy.

What, then, draws us to become “pet parents”?

1. Having a pet is an opportunity to care for something outside of ourselves. Pets personify unconditional love and a wondrous



connection to nature. They're also great entertainers, and as creatures of habit, can serve as a grounding force in our lives.

2. Health and welfare benefits can be found in pet ownership, too. APPA cites several studies supporting the pet connection as being good for us:



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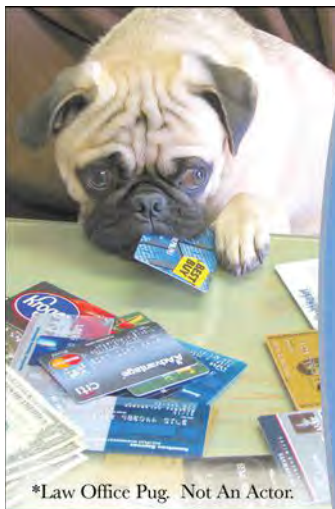
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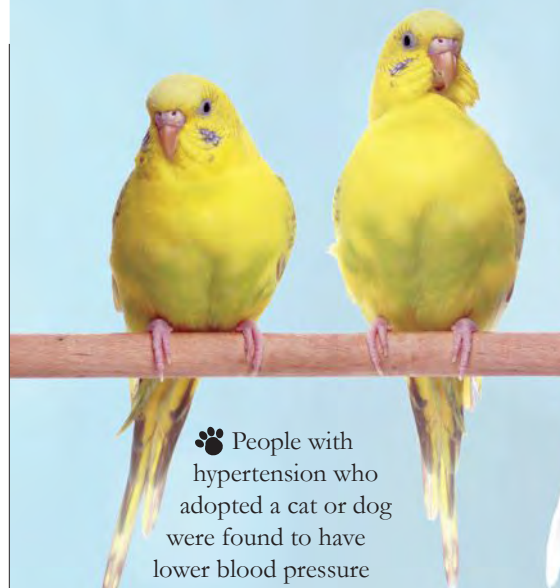
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🐾 People with hypertension who adopted a cat or dog were found to have lower blood pressure readings in stressful

situations than those who did not own pets. (Dr. Karen Allen, State University of New York at Buffalo.)



🐾 Pets have also been found to be effective at reducing human stress and anger. Walking a dog, riding a horse, petting a cat or any number of activities soothes nerves, provides physical release and promotes relaxation.

🐾 Pets inspire greater psychological stability, which for humans, may add a measure of protection against heart disease. Studies indicate pet owners





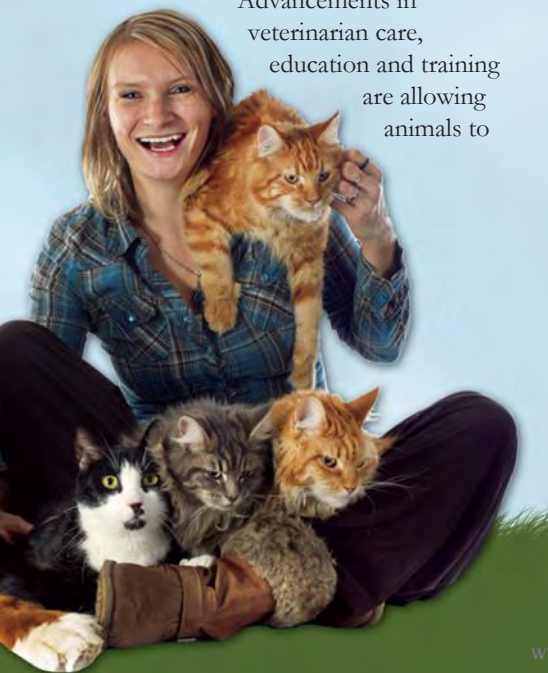
tend to make fewer doctor visits. (National Institute of Health Technology Assessment Workshop: Health Benefits of Pets.)

🐾 APPA also notes that autistic children tend to be more responsive when a pet is in the area, and children who have pets often perform better in school.

🐾 Senior citizens and dementia patients have shown a tendency to react more positively around pets. Baby boomers have the largest instances of pet ownership, and as they transition to empty nesting are keeping pets longer.

These benefits and privileges come with responsibilities. Truly there is no such thing as a free puppy, and although according to the National Council on Pet Population Study and Policy (NCPSP), about 65 percent of pets are acquired from friends and family for free or at low cost, pet owners must provide medical care and prevention for their pets.

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Currently APPA estimates that, at most, 3 percent of dogs and 1 percent of cats are insured. Investing in pet insurance is on the increase, though, at an expected annual rate of 10 percent and may especially be pertinent for horse owners considering the cost of equine surgery. Annual medical expenses for a dog are generally just under \$1,000 and for a cat around \$650.

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More than at any time, people have access to pet-specific information via specialized broadcast programming, publications, social media, clinics and events, breed associations, veterinary journals and pet industry studies. Individual pets have gained fame as social media "stars" with their own Facebook pages, Twitter accounts and blogs. As the industry grows and people increasingly grasp the peril of unwanted animals and unscrupulous/uneducated breeders, more rescue operations and organizations are forming and tolerance is lessening toward all abuse of animals.

Thankfully, for those puppies, guppies, kittens, ponies, parakeets, hedgehogs, hamsters or gerbils, bunnies, ferrets, turtles or others fortunate to be adoptees of responsible and devoted pet parents, life in America is good. **NOW**



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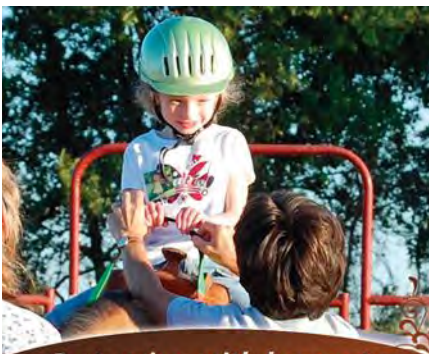
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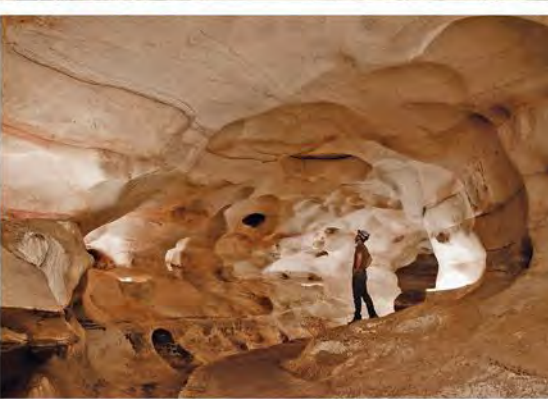
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Marble Falls is surrounded by the best Texas has to offer nature lovers. Many country and farm-to-market roads wind gently through the Texas Hill Country. If you don't mind slowing down and getting lost for a little while, you might see some scenery that makes a vacation worth taking. Take a tour of a nearby cavern or a boat tour and look to the skies to catch a glimpse of a bald eagle. If birdies and other types of eagles are more your style, hit the links on one of 12 golf courses within 20 minutes of Marble Falls —



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- Do you take medications for knee pain?
- Are you considering surgery to alleviate knee pain?
- Have you suffered a knee injury during a sporting event?
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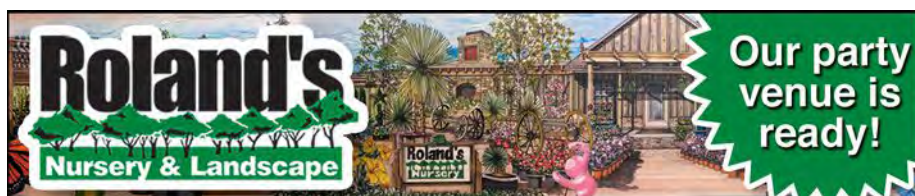
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By Alisha Workman. Photos courtesy of: Marble Falls/Lake LBJ Chamber of Commerce & CVB.



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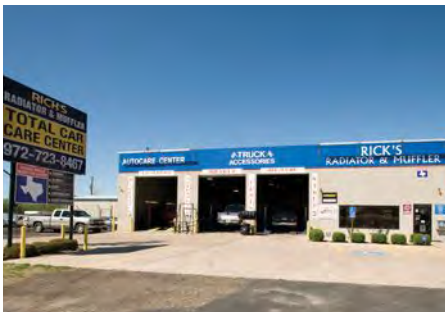


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Jeremy Rogers works long hours to provide Midlothian and surrounding areas with total car care.

LANDMARK OF CARE

Rick's Total Car Care has served the needs of Midlothian for 32 years.

— By Betty Tryon

In a community, a business that's been around for over three decades can rightly be called a landmark. For 32 years, Rick's Total Car Care, located at the edge of Ellis County, has met the car needs of Midlothian, DeSoto, Duncanville and Cedar Hill residents. Working at the business for 20 years is Jeremy Rogers. His father influenced his decision to go into the business of automotive service and repair. When his dad started the business, he initially focused on radiators and mufflers. "For the last 15 years, we have added more services and options for the customer," Jeremy said. His dad no longer works in the business, which Jeremy purchased for himself two years ago, keeping Rick's Total Car Care in the family.

Ten years ago, Jeremy was on hand when disaster struck and the original shop burned down. But the new building turned out to be better for the business operation. Staff members were able to organize the space in such a way that customers were better served. "The new office is a lot more efficient," he explained. "We get more work done this way. We've added new additions to the building and can give more reliable and efficient service."

In expanding Rick's Total Car Care, Jeremy has installed a computerized line machine and added to the list of services the shop provides. Among these are new tire replacement and rotation, tuneups, exhaust work, brake service and repair, struts and engine diagnostics, all performed with the latest diagnostic

Business **NOW**

tools and equipment. The store also carries Jasper engines and transmissions. Jeremy uses that brand because Jasper offers a three-year, 100,000-mile warranty on their products. Rick's Total Car Care also provides electronic fuel injection service and repairs, wheel alignment, steering and suspension service, air conditioning service and repairs, windshield service and wiper blades. "We work on foreign and domestic cars and started doing state inspections six months ago," Jeremy added. The business also offers a satisfaction guarantee on all services offered.

"The best part of my job is taking care of people. We are very honest and don't try to upsell if you don't need something."

To perform optimum customer service, Jeremy employs three other technicians. Jeremy, as the owner, functions more as manager, but he still helps service vehicles sometimes. "We're a team," he pointed out. "I trust their work and don't have to worry about what they do."

Keeping convenience in mind, Rick's Total Car Care offers customers a waiting room with free Wi-Fi while their car is being repaired. Jeremy also recognizes the GE Capital Autocare credit card. Customers can apply and if approved, can use the card for their auto repairs. "We also rent Penske Trucks," Jeremy informed. "If you need to rent a truck for a local move, or one way, call us and we can reserve one for you."

Jeremy puts in long hours at the shop, because he loves what he does. "The best part of my job," he admitted, "is taking care of people. We are very honest and don't try to upsell if you don't need something. For 32 years we have been here as a family-owned business and want to stay here. We do quality work." **NOW**

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The MHS Debatespeech team wins the speech sweepstakes trophy for the fourth year in a row.



Rodney Jordan, Lillie Crabtree and Frank Carr wait patiently for the procession for Officer Heather Phares.



First Methodist School Midlothian students get an early start on Mother's Day gifts by planting seeds during their unit on plants.



Cammy Jackson, Brett Kemp, Lisa Lemon and Renee McElheney enjoy the fruits of their efforts for spring.



Maycee G, Morgan J. and Abby N. take first place at their Oklahoma Cheer Competition.



John Holmes, the balloon artist, thrills kids at Spring Fling.



Brynn's dad speaks to Mrs. Cooper's second grade class about using math in his job as a banker.



J.R. Irvin friends stick together at the park.



WGMS Varsity Boys and Varsity Girls choirs competed in the annual show choir competition.

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What is Asset Allocation and How Does it Work?

Asset allocation is a technique used to spread your investment dollars across several asset categories. Stocks, bonds, cash or cash alternatives are the most common components of an asset allocation strategy. However, others may be available and appropriate as well. The general goal is to minimize volatility while maximizing return (though asset allocation alone can't ensure a profit or eliminate the risk of a loss). The process involves dividing your investment dollars among asset categories that do not all respond to the same market forces in the same way at the same time. Though there are no guarantees, ideally, if your investments in one category are performing poorly, you will have assets in another category that are performing well. The gains in the latter will offset the losses in the former, minimizing the overall effect on your portfolio. Remember that all investing involves risk, including the possible loss of principal, and there can be no guarantee that any investing strategy will be successful.

The number of asset categories you select for your portfolio and the percentage of portfolio dollars you allocate to each category will depend, in large part, on the size of your portfolio, your tolerance for risk, your investment goals and your time horizon (i.e., how long you plan to keep your money invested). A simple portfolio may include as few as three investment categories, with a percentage of dollars divided among, for example, cash alternatives, bonds and stocks. A more complex portfolio may include many more asset categories or break down each of the

broader asset categories into subcategories (for example, the category "stocks" might be further divided into subcategories such as large cap stocks, small cap stocks, international stocks, high-tech stocks and so on).

Determining an appropriate asset allocation may be the most important single investment decision you make, because it will likely have more impact on your overall return than the selection of individual investments. Don't hesitate to get expert help if you need it. And be sure to periodically review your portfolio to ensure that your chosen mix of investments continues to serve your investment needs as your circumstances change over time. **NOW**

This information was developed by Broadridge, an independent third party. It is general in nature, is not a complete statement of all information necessary for making an investment decision and is not a recommendation or a solicitation to buy or sell any security. Investments and strategies mentioned may not be suitable for all investors. Past performance may not be indicative of future results. Raymond James & Associates, Inc. member New York Stock Exchange/SIPC does not provide advice on tax, legal or mortgage issues. These matters should be discussed with an appropriate professional.

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Todd Simmons is a Raymond James Financial Advisor based in Duncanville.



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Complexity in Lupus

— By Betty Tryon, BSN

Leslie Hunt, a contestant on the *American Idol* TV show defines lupus as the biggest hindrance in her life. She is only one of the 1.5 million Americans with lupus. Lupus erythematosus is an autoimmune disease where the body targets its own cells for destruction. The cause of this devastating turn of events is unknown. Some scientists, however, believe any one or a combination of these triggers may precipitate it: hormones, stress, genetics, sunlight, some medications and the environment. Because it is an autoimmune disease and possesses the ability to occur and create havoc to any organ in the body, it is very complex in its actions, diagnosis and treatment.

When lupus manifests itself, common symptoms are: pain, swelling, fatigue, inflammation and a characteristic butterfly rash on the face. Other symptoms will be specific to the organ affected. Lupus can be a challenging disease to diagnose because of its possible wide-ranging effects. The disease can be mild or life threatening, short-lived or protracted. Some symptoms can have a rapid onset with a short duration, or there can be a progression of symptoms over years. If all of that were not challenging enough, the disease can be confused with other diseases, because early symptoms are not distinct enough and can mirror many other diseases or disorders. Symptoms also vary from person to person.

Diagnosis might be difficult, but it is not impossible. Being treated

by a physician who is very familiar with lupus, such as a rheumatologist or immunologist, is important. Your doctor will take an in-depth medical history and do a very thorough physical examination. This can establish a baseline for symptomatology for the disease, as well as give the doctor a clue as to what triggers or exacerbates symptoms. Some of the laboratory work done is a complete blood count (CBC), urinalysis, blood chemistry, tests for specific antibodies and erythrocyte sedimentation rate.

Treatment will depend on where and how lupus manifests itself. As symptoms progress, other clinical professionals may be called upon for assistance or consultation, such as a cardiologist if lupus is in the heart, a nephrologist if the disease is in the kidneys or a dermatologist for the skin. Other professionals who may be included on the health care team are psychologists, nurses and social workers. Your health care team will create the best treatment plan for your age, symptoms and your general health. Coming up with a plan will take much observation, tests and time. Putting a conscientious effort into finding a way to live your best life with lupus is the first step toward good health. **NOW**

This article is for general information only and does not constitute medical advice. Consult with your physician if you have questions regarding this topic.

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June 6

Midlothian High School Senior Graduation: 8:00 p.m., MISD Multi-Purpose Stadium.

Annual Pancake Breakfast Fly-in: 8:00-11:00 a.m., Mid-Way Regional Airport, located off Hwy 287 between Waxahachie and Midlothian. Breakfast tickets: \$6, adults and children 8 and over; \$3, children under 3. Free parking. For more information, call (972) 923-0080 or visit www.mid-wayregional.com.

Brunch With My Daddy & Dad With His Little Princess: 9:00 a.m.-noon, Ryan's Grill Buffet and Bakery, 1400 N. Hwy 77, Waxahachie. Event is presented by Kingdom Event Planning. Limited seating available for girls ages 5-18 and their dads. \$10 per person. For tickets, call (972) 748-4026 or (972) 748-4026.

June 7, 14, 21, 28

Downtown Farmers Market: 8:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Heritage Park, 234 N. 8th St., Midlothian. Open air market hosted by the Midlothian Downtown Business Association held every Saturday morning from May - October.

June 9 — July 23

Summer Golf & Wellness Camps:

9:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m., **Monday-Wednesday**, Waxahachie Country Club, 1920 Hwy 287 Bypass W, Waxahachie. **June 9-11**, beginner/intermediate; **June 23-25**, beginner/intermediate; **July 7-9**, beginner/intermediate; **July 21-23**, advanced. Each camp is \$140. Price includes lunch. Mondays will focus on nutrition. Tuesdays will focus on exercise and stretching. Wednesdays a leader in the community will come and talk about leadership, integrity and hard work. For more information, contact Laura Hargrove at (817) 673-0356 or at laurahargrovegolf@gmail.com.

June 12

Asperger's Syndrome Community of Ellis County meeting; 7:00 p.m., 208 S. 4th St. Support group for adults with or living with Asperger's Syndrome.

June 14

Movie in the Park - *DESPICABLE ME 2*: 8:30 p.m., Hawkins Spring Park, 2013 Movie from Universal Pictures continues the story of former villain Gru, his three daughters, and of course, the Minions after they are recruited by the Anti-Villain League. Rating: PG Bring blankets and chairs. Concession stand will be open. Giveaways at every show.

Wildflower Walk: 9:00 a.m., Mockingbird Nature Park, 1361 Onward Rd. Guided walk led by members of the Indian Trail Chapter of the Texas Master Naturalists. Public invited. Free event, Bring drinking water. If the weather is rainy, event will be canceled. For more information: email information@itmnc.com.

June 16 — 20

VBX: 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Midlothian Bible Church, Fun, full day of sports and special interest camps, Lunch is served. Participation in large group games, Bible teaching and crafts, for children entering first grade through sixth. Cost \$70.00, Scholarships available, online registration required at midlothianbible.org. For more information call (972) 723-0002.

June 23 — 26

Vacation Bible School: 6:00-8:30p.m. First United Methodist Church

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In the Kitchen With Karla McNulty

— By Betty Tryon

Karla McNulty's dad decided she needed to learn how to cook early in life. "My father always made my sister and I stay in the kitchen and watch my mother cook," Karla recalled. "His famous words were, 'Get in the kitchen and watch your mother. One of these days you will have a family and need to cook for them.'"

Karla taught her kids essentially the same message — learn to cook and "not live on fast food all the time." And Karla's mom helps reinforce the message. "My mother keeps a handwritten book of all the recipes she learned or invented herself," Karla said. What a family treasure! **NOW**

Chicken Taco Filling in Slow Cooker

1 pkg. taco seasoning
1 cup chicken broth
1 lb. boneless skinless chicken breasts

1. Dissolve taco seasoning in chicken broth.
2. Place chicken breast in slow cooker and cover with broth. Cover with lid and cook on low for 6-8 hours.
3. Shred chicken meat into bite-size pieces. Use in tacos, burritos, nachos, salad or on a bun.

Salt and pepper, to taste
Carrots, to taste
Potatoes, to taste

1. Cut slits in roast; place garlic into slits. Put roast in slow cooker.
2. Pour mushroom soup over roast. Add Worcestershire sauce; sprinkle dry soup mix on top and add salt and pepper. Add carrots, potatoes and other vegetables to taste.
3. Cover and cook on low for 8 hours.

Chocolate Chip Cookies

Makes about 3 dozen.

1/2 cup margarine, melted
1 egg beaten
1 box yellow cake mix
2 cups chocolate chips
1/2 cup nuts, chopped (optional)

1. Allow margarine to cool. Combine egg and cake mix with butter; blend well. Stir in

chocolate chips and nuts.
2. Drop by spoonfuls onto greased cookie sheet; bake at 350 F for 5-8 minutes or until edges are set. Center may appear soft.
3. Allow to cool before serving.

Banana Bread

2 cups flour
1/2 cup butter or shortening
1 cup sugar
1/2 tsp. baking soda
2 eggs
1/4 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. baking powder
3 bananas, mashed
1/2 cup pecans

1. Mix all ingredients well; turn in well-greased loaf pan.
2. Bake in moderate oven at 350 F for 45 minutes. Remove from oven. Let stand in pan a few minutes; remove from pan to cool.

Lightly Smothered Chicken

1 tsp. olive oil
1 green bell pepper, sliced
8 oz. mushrooms, sliced
1 large onion, cut in half and sliced
1 clove garlic, minced
1 tsp. oregano
Salt and pepper, to taste
12 oz. boneless skinless chicken breast, grilled (Tenders can be used.)
1 Tbsp. Dijon mustard
1/2 cup reduced fat mozzarella cheese

1. Preheat oven to 350 F.
2. Heat olive oil in a pan and add green peppers, mushrooms and onions. Sauté until soft; add garlic, oregano, salt and pepper. Stir together and set aside.
3. In an 8x8-inch pan, add grilled chicken. Slather chicken evenly with Dijon mustard.
4. Take warm bell pepper and onion mixture and top chicken. Cover vegetables and chicken with cheese.
5. Cook in the oven for approximately 10 minutes until cheese is melted.

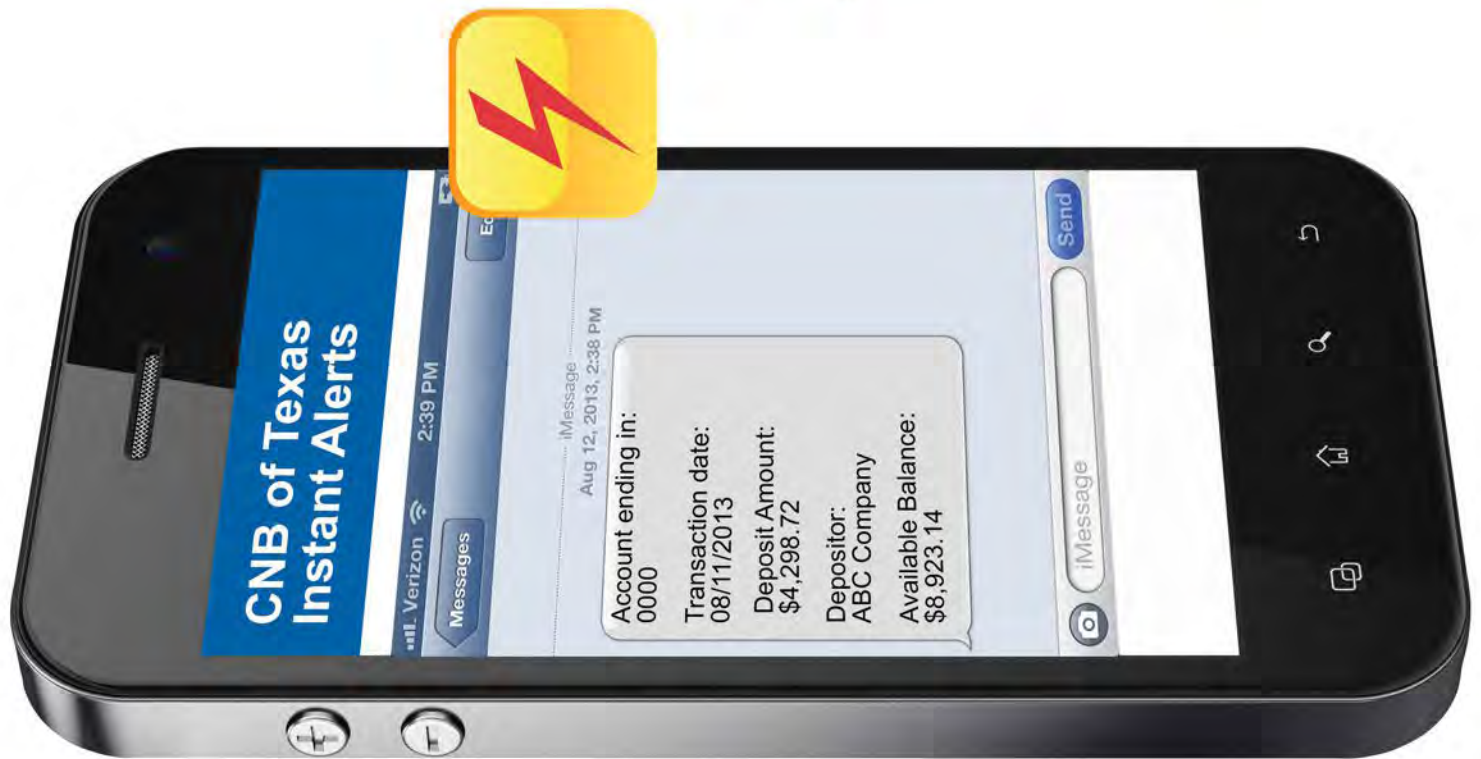
Working Woman's Roast

3-5 lb. roast
Fresh garlic, sliced, as desired
1 10 3/4-oz. can cream of mushroom soup
2 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
1 pkg. onion soup mix

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